

## PROPOSAL EVALUATION

### *Proposition 50, Chapter 8 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Grant*

PIN	5096	COUNTY	Nevada
APPLICANT	Friends of Deer Creek	AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$500,000
PROJECT TITLE	Deer Creek Integrated Regional Mercury Remediation Plan	TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$770,000

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey and the Sierra Nevada Mercury Working Group, the applicant will develop and implement a synoptic survey and source assessment of the Deer Creek watershed to identify sources of mercury loading and determine in what form these sources are occurring in order to implement suitable targets for remediation.

**WORK PLAN - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has a detailed and specific work plan that adequately documents the proposal. Weighting factor is 3.**

**Score: 9**

**Comment:** This proposal is for the development of a Mercury Remediation Plan (MRP), not an IRWMP. Further, the work elements include conducting a synoptic survey and a source assessment. These would be elements of an implementation proposal rather than components of an IRWMP. However, the proposal does include a work plan and associated schedule and budget. The work plan includes deliverables associated with tasks 3 and 4. However, the methodology to be followed in tasks 1, 2 and 5 is less clear. The work plan and schedule are in reasonable agreement and seem properly sequenced. The budget does not seem to provide much detail and is difficult to correlate with work plan items as formatted.

**DESCRIPTION OF REGION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented a detailed and specific description that adequately documents the region. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 3**

**Comment:** The description of the region is focused largely on the aspects associated with mercury contamination and loading. Limited discussion of groundwater management is included. No other water management or local planning issues are described. The project area could have been defined in a more concise manner. Maps illustrating the project area are provided in the application. Illustrations showing agency boundaries within the proposed project area are not included. Water-related infrastructure within the region is addressed but land use is not mentioned. The region seems to constitute an appropriate area for implementation of this project. Regional authority to implement this project seems to be adequately assured. This effort would be better managed on a regional basis than by individual entities acting within the region.

**OBJECTIVES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific planning objectives. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 2**

**Comment:** The objectives listed are the tasks that would take place during project implementation. There is no discussion of what the regional plans are. The proposal does indicate that the MRP will address the statewide priorities. However, the primary focus is on water quality improvement with respect to mercury. Water management seems secondary. It does not identify objectives consistent with an IRWMP.

**INTEGRATION OF WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented how water management strategies will be integrated. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 4**

**Comment:** Water management strategies are identified and meet the IRWM standards; however, the proposal does not identify integration of those water management strategies. There is no description of how the proposed MRP will be integrated with other plans in the region. There is no description of how the plan will consider water supply reliability, flood management, recreation, stormwater capture and management, or water conservation.

**IMPLEMENTATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately detailed plan implementation. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 2**

**Comment:** There is no indication of what entity will be responsible for adopting the MRP nor of plans for developing an ongoing institutional structure to ensure IRWMP implementation. No detail of how performance will be monitored or measured. While this application is more of a proposal for project implementation, there is no implementation schedule or indication that the projects will be implemented. There is some discussion of how projects will be selected and prioritized, but no discussion of implementation beyond "implemented following the adoption of the Plan in January 2008." More discussion is needed.

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**IMPACTS AND BENEFITS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately presented and documented the impacts and benefits of the Plan. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 4**

**Comment:** The applicant states that the Sierra Nevada Mercury Working Group will be responsible for prioritizing projects for the MRP. The proposed MRP provides a means to establish a baseline to lower mercury levels in the Deer Creek watershed. It further hopes to establish a template for repetition of this process in other watersheds in the Sierra Nevada foothill region. However, it does not identify an inclusion in the MRP of analysis of potential impacts within the region and adjacent areas. Only impacts related to existing mercury issues are described. No impacts of implementing the proposed MRP are included. Similarly, benefits of implementing the MRP are solely focused on mercury remediation with no discussion of potential multiple benefits.

**DATA AND TECHNICAL ANALYSIS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data and technical analysis components of the proposal. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 3**

**Comment:** The applicant provides a reference list of previous investigations. However, their relevance to this project is not clarified in the application. The applicant indicates that they are in their fifth year of water quality sampling. Referenced Appendix 2 where this effort would have been documented is not included in the application. The proposal includes a significant amount of sampling and data collection to support IRWMP development.

**DATA MANAGEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data management procedures. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 5**

**Comment:** The proposal identifies a strategy for the dissemination of data through a working group meeting, newsletters, reports and journals. Data collected from the survey will be distributed to stakeholders annually in a newsletter. A USGS Scientific Investigations Report will also be prepared documenting the results of the survey. The data collected from the IRWMP will be integrated into existing water monitoring efforts being conducted by the State Water Board and Regional Water Board.

**STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented stakeholder involvement concerns. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 4**

**Comment:** The applicant has generated a significant list of stakeholders from the region including major water related entities. The applicant proposes outreach through workshops and distribution of bilingual educational materials. The Sierra Nevada Mercury Working Group will provide a forum for stakeholder involvement with the development and implementation of the Deer Creek MRP. All stakeholders will be invited to participate in the Sierra Nevada Mercury Working Group, which will be responsible for the development of the MRP. The applicant states that additional stakeholders will be identified through newsletters, articles, and outreach materials developed regarding mercury contamination and fish advisories. The applicant discusses how they would distribute information to other potential stakeholders. However, no plan to seek the potential stakeholders' participation is identified.

**DISADVANTAGE COMMUNITIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented disadvantaged community concerns. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 3**

**Comment:** The applicant states that the region contains one or more DACs as determined in the 2000 Census. Representatives of DACs have not been specifically identified to have been part of the planning process. Water quality and water supply needs for DACs are stated to be identified in the UWMP and proposed to be incorporated into this IRWMP. The region includes DACs, but the proposal does not identify how many, or whether they are engaged in the planning process.

**RELATION TO LOCAL PLANNING - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented the Plan's relationship to local planning efforts. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 3**

**Comment:** This proposal identifies existing local planning documents that will form the foundation for this MRP, but it does not describe the relationship between those documents and the MRP. The applicant identifies three plans to be considered in development of the MRP: the Nevada County General Plan, Nevada County Urban Water Management Plan and the Deer Creek Coordinated Resource Management Plan.

**AGENCY COORDINATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented agency coordination issues. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 3**

**Comment:** The application identifies several local, State (including regulatory), and federal agencies, as opposed to the less detailed Agency Coordination section that will be involved in the development and implementation of the MRP. The applicant states that the MRP will facilitate coordination with relevant agencies. The applicant has generated an impressive list of stakeholders in support of this process. However, a mechanism to insure coordination amongst these various agencies is not clearly provided in the application.

**TOTAL SCORE: 45**